

AMENDMENTS

Please amend the following claims:

1. (Twice amended) A method of absorbing hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids from a mixture of such a liquid with water comprising:

K₁
treating the mixture with lignocellulosic plant material which has been modified by esterification of hydroxyl groups in the lignin of the lignocellulose material such as to render the material more attractive to hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids while still retaining hydrogen bonding to maintain the structural integrity of the material; and filtering or removing the hydrophobic water-immiscible liquid from the mixture.

K₂
20. (Amended) An article for absorbing hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids comprising lignocellulosic plant material which has been rendered relatively more attractive to hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids by esterification of hydroxyl groups in the lignin of the plant material, and a covering material provided around the modified plant material through which the hydrophobic liquid may pass, wherein the article is in the form of a boom or pillow.

Please delete claims 16, 21 and 22.